

Testimony of Tom O'Connor
To Senate Judiciary Committee
On HB 3093
May 14, 2015

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee. My name is Tom O'Connor.

I am a lifelong gun owner and a native Oregonian. I am here today because I am concerned about firearm safety, particularly with regard to concealed weapons carried in public places.

HB 3093 is apparently intended to permit residents of other states with a concealed handgun license from that state to carry a concealed weapon in Oregon if the other state has license requirements equal to Oregon's. I agree the -7 amendment is necessary to make it clear that all of Oregon's requirements must be met.

However, my main concern with HB 3093 is that it puts the cart before the horse. Before we bring in a whole new group of out-of-state gun owners, I believe we need to clearly understand the privileges and exemptions these folks would be entitled to under current Oregon law and whether Oregon's licensing requirements need to be strengthened.

Current Oregon law provides Oregon CHL holders with a sort of golden ticket. Current Oregon law allows Oregon CHL holders to carry their loaded firearms into schools, universities, public buildings, and other public spaces including this Capitol building.

This bill, therefore, opens the door to out of state CHL holders to carry their loaded firearms into our schools, universities, public spaces and public buildings. It increases the risk to the public and to law enforcement from accidental or purposeful gun violence by sheer numbers alone.

If this bill is going to move at some point and allow out-of-state CHL holders to carry loaded firearms in Oregon, I urge you to consider amending it to strengthen our existing CHL process to include the following firearm safety measures:

1. Add a requirement for in person training including live-fire experience and the basics of dealing with potentially violent confrontations.
2. Require a showing of "just cause" and give local law enforcement, who know the local community the best, discretion to issue and/or revoke CHLs based upon minimum state standards.
3. Prohibit the carrying of loaded firearms in schools, universities and public buildings.

These amendments would help reduce the risk to the public and to law enforcement but would not impact the use of firearms for hunting, target shooting, or personal protection in the home.

Thank you.

